



APHIS' Animal Care Report

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

We've been as busy as ever in Animal Care (AC) over the last few months, working on complex issues such as pain and distress in research animals and holding our national work conference for our employees. We've also brought on several new inspectors and headquarters staff. In this report, we include information on changes in rules for airlines carrying animals that will be administered through the Department of Transportation and how the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will likely be involved.

We hope you find the report informative and helpful. If you have comments, need to change your address, or would like to subscribe to the hard-copy mailing, please contact us at (301) 734-7255 or ace@usda.gov.

W. Ron DeHaven
Deputy Administrator

Pain and Distress Updates

On June 21, AC updated its Policy 12, which provides written guidance on the narrative written about alternatives considered to painful procedures. The update expands the options beyond the standard data-base search to include symposiums, conferences, and consultations. The new policy is posted on the Internet at www.aphis.usda.gov/ac/policy/policy12.

On July 10, AC requested comments on possible changes to the pain categorization system and creation of a definition for "distress" in the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) regulations. Comments will be accepted until November 7. The comment period was extended from its original September 8 deadline. The notice is available in the July 10 Federal Register and on the Internet. Go to www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html, scroll down the page, and look for "Docket #: 00-005-1."

Comments Sought on Proposed Licensing Changes

On August 4, AC requested comments on several proposed changes and clarifications to AWA regulations, including licensing requirements, procedures, and exemptions.

AC expects the changes will not only clarify regulations but will also help AC to better enforce the AWA. "One of the proposed changes would allow us to use an applicant's violation of other Federal, State, or local laws or regulations pertaining to

animal cruelty and handling to keep the party from getting a USDA license," said Ron DeHaven, deputy administrator for AC.

Other proposed changes include

- Expanding requirements of licensees who maintain potentially dangerous animals,
- Changing APHIS' method for notification of license expiration, and
- Clarifying requirements regarding the number of female breeding dogs and/or cats that may be maintained on a single premises without a license.

The proposed rule is available in the August 4 Federal Register and on the Internet. Go to www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html and look for "Docket #: 97-121-1."

National Work Conference

AC provided practical and diverse training and educational seminars to its field, supervisory, and headquarters personnel during its biennial National Work Conference in Oklahoma City April 18-21. The 80 participants included 65 field inspectors, 9 supervisory animal care specialists, 3 regional directors, 2 staff officers, and AC's deputy administrator.

Nearly 50 people, including 19 outside experts, AC speakers, and other AC team members, provided an outstanding curriculum. The program conveyed a mixture of basic information and specialized, advanced knowledge on a wide range of topics organized into three main areas: nonhuman primates, dangerous animals, and miscellaneous topics that included the basic inspection process.

The first day of the conference began with a recognition and awards session, during which AC announced that Dr. Ruth Bakker is the AC Inspector of the Year. The day also included general sessions, covering the uniform inspection process, violence in the workplace, and thermoregulation in elephants and exhibit design. In breakout sessions, the discussions of violence issues and thermoregulation continued, and attendees received training in the use of digital cameras and the Internet.

Day two was devoted to nonhuman primates. General and breakout sessions included natural history, behavior, nutrition, social housing, safety issues, and environmental enrichment. Excellent outside experts presented new and invaluable information for AC employees.

The third day brought a change in focus to dangerous-animal issues, including updates on policy and regulatory changes, basics in animal training, transportation issues and standards, carnivore nutrition, behavior of bears and big cats, and capture and restraint techniques.

The last day's wrapup session included discussions of safety and health, farm animal policy implementation, and course evaluations.

USDA–APHIS–Animal Care

Headquarters Office

W. Ron DeHaven, D.V.M.
4700 River Road, Unit 84
Riverdale, MD 20737–1234
Phone: (301) 734–7833
Fax: (301) 734–4978

Eastern Region

Elizabeth Goldentyer, D.V.M.
920 Main Campus Drive, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27606–5210
Phone: (919) 716–5532
Fax: (919) 716–5696

Central Region

Walter Christensen, D.V.M.
P.O. Box 915004 (letters)
501 Felix Street, Bldg. 11 (packages)
Fort Worth, TX 76115–9104
Phone: (817) 885–6923
Fax: (817) 885–6917

Western Region

Robert Gibbens, D.V.M.
9580 Micron Avenue, Suite J
Sacramento, CA 95827
Phone: (916) 857–6205
Fax: (916) 857–6212

World Wide Web Home Page

www.aphis.usda.gov/ac

E-mail Address

ace@usda.gov

Staff Changes

Throughout the spring and summer, AC has continued to fill field inspector positions around the country. When all positions are filled, AC will have 75 inspectors, up from 65 in September 1999. New inspectors are in Denver, CO, Fort Myers, FL, Springfield, MA, Springdale, AR, and Indianola, IA. Our Gainesville, FL, inspector transferred to Montgomery, AL, and was replaced by a former inspector from New Mexico.

This summer, AC also gained four new staff employees at headquarters in Riverdale, MD. Jodie Kulpa is a veterinary medical officer who transferred from Wisconsin. Her focus will be on issues related to research. Kulpa has worked with AC since 1993 after serving as an inspector with APHIS' veterinary biologics field operations. Kulpa received her D.V.M. from the University of Minnesota.

Two new program assistants also came onboard. Carrie Joyce will support the staff on a variety of issues by coordinating meetings, reports, and various nationwide projects. She comes from APHIS' Wildlife Services operational support staff. And Cathy Sullivan came to AC from Marketing and Regulatory Programs–Business Services. She is focusing on work with AC's data bases and software. Crystal Bass is a new secretary on the staff. She transferred to USDA from another Federal agency in April.

AC Updates Strategic Direction

Continuing with implementation of AC's revised strategic direction, the Animal Care Management Team met in May to begin work on a new operating plan. The discussion also included increasing the quality of dog-dealer inspections and improving the timeliness of enforcement actions.

The new strategic direction highlights accomplishments from the last several years and identifies areas that need new or continued improvement. Check out the complete report at www.aphis.usda.gov/ac/strategicplan.html on the AC Website.

USDA Employee Honored for Dogfighting Investigation

Investigative and Enforcement Services investigator Jackie Freeman was honored by the Secretary of Agriculture in June along with an assistant U.S. attorney and a sergeant (now lieutenant) with the Texas Department of Public Safety. Together, they conducted a 5-year investigation of illegal interstate dog fighting, and their work led to the Federal and State prosecutions of more than 60 individuals in four States involved in this illegal activity.

Pet Travel News

Keep a good look out! The “Traveling With Your Pet” public service announcement (PSA) could be coming to a TV screen near you. AC’s animated 30-second PSA has aired in 29 States across the country and was even requested by outlets in Bermuda. So far, the PSA has garnered AC more than \$345,000 in free air time.

There have been a lot of changes over the last several months for these pets traveling by air. Many airlines have decided to not carry pets as checked baggage at all this summer, and some perhaps permanently. This does not include animals shipped as cargo, only those going with the passengers as baggage. These restrictions were imposed by the airlines, not as the result of any AWA or regulation changes.

In April, Congress passed and the President signed legislation for reorganization of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) (P.L. 106–181), though new regulations have not yet been written. The law includes requirements that airlines report to the Department of Transportation (DOT) incidents involving animal injury, escape, or death that occur in conjunction with air transport. The law also directs DOT to work with airlines to improve the training of employees to be able to better ensure the safety of animals and to better explain to passengers the conditions under which their pets will travel, such as differences in conditions of the cargo hold versus the passenger cabin.

AC expects to be working with the FAA on a memorandum of understanding between USDA and DOT on the reporting requirements and sharing information to train airline employees.

Inspectors Equipped With Digital Cameras

All AC inspectors were equipped with digital and traditional cameras this year as part of AC’s effort to build stronger cases. Sometimes video cameras are used as well. Photographs are routinely taken if the inspectors encounter serious or continuing noncompliant items. Digital photos can quickly be transmitted to the regional office for consultation purposes. These photos can also be easily copied onto a computer and shared with the facility. APHIS officials have the authority to take photographs to document violations. Digital photographs will be submitted with an investigation request and could become part of an investigative file just like the traditional prints.

Policy Update

AC policies are available in full on the AC Website (www.aphis.usda.gov/ac/polman.html).

Policies Under Development

- Painful procedures (revision of Policy 11)

Policies Completed

- Consideration of alternatives to painful/distressful procedures (revision to Policy 12), June 12, 2000

Regulatory Update

The items listed below are under consideration and not yet published in the Federal Register, were published in the Federal Register and are open for comment, or were previously open for comment and are now under review by the Department.

Notices

- Definition for and reporting of pain and distress (comments due 11/7)
- Nonhuman primate environment enrichment policy (under review)
- Policy on training and handling of potentially dangerous animals (comment period closed 4/18)
- Petition for regulation of rats, mice, and birds (under review)

Proposed Rules

- Inspection, licensing, and procurement of animals (comments due 10/3)
- Identification of unweaned puppies and kittens (under consideration)
- Amend definition of exhibitor (under consideration)
- Veterinary medical records (under consideration)
- Incorporation of American Veterinary Medical Association standards for euthanasia (under consideration)
- Regulation of wholesale dealers of hunting, breeding, and security dogs (under consideration)
- Marine mammals: nonconsensus language and interactive programs (under consideration)
- Acclimation certificates for dogs and cats (under review)
- Exotic canids and felids: minimum age for transport (under consideration)

Final Rules

- Confiscation of animals (under consideration)
- Marine mammals: consensus language (under consideration)

Technical Amendments

- Perimeter fencing (under consideration)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.